"The BLINDNESS of VIRTUE" vs "The RULE of THREE"

Or How the "Eternal Triangle" Asserted Itself in the Lives of a Playwright and an Author, Each of Whom Made a Specialty of Writing All About Love and Sex and Such Knowable Things.

MRS. COSMO HAMILTON.

NOW to add another chapter to the already lengthy book, The Little Ironies of Life, and further to increase the gayety of nations, Cosmo Hamilton, English writer of novels on virtue and of plays that preach a still more virtuous lesson, has busted up an American home and robbed Guy Reginald Bolton, who has written a play telling all about how to get and remain married successfully, of his lovely young wife.

It is very, very funny. Both playwrights if they had collaborated on a farce for 20 years couldn't possibly have produced a play so hilariously funny as the actual and serious situation they have brought about in their real lives.

Cosmo Hamilton has written reams of pages most of which preach the beauty of innocence, the desirability of being very, very good, the value of remaining virtuous and the utter loveliness of purity in all things.

Guy Reginald Bolton has written a play, "The Rule of Three." In it he talks of women and marriage with the assurance of one who knows practically all worth while about both subjects. He is quite sure how a woman can win a man, how a man can win a woman and how each can hold the other.

And yet Cosmo Hamilton, the preacher of innocence, purity and virtue, fell in love with the wife of Guy Bolton, the knower of women and marriage. But Cosmo Hamilton did more than that. He so comported himself with Guy Bolton's wife that Guy Bolton found it very easy to get a divorce from her and the custody of a child. Now Bolton is living alone while both the late Mrs. Bolton and Cosmo Hamilton are residents of England.

That the Boltons had not lived together for the last year was known to a few intimate friends. But that he had brought divorce proceedings was not known until the final decree had been signed. The justice awarded the son to the father and the daughter to the mother. The couple were married in New York in November of 1907. Mr. Bolton has been living in New York. Mr. Hamilton lives in Buckinghamshire, England.

It developed in the trial that the man who wrote "The Blindness of Virtue" registered at the Hotel Seville in New York with Mrs. Bolton as Mr. and Mrs. Bolton of Boston. A love letter written by Mrs. Bolton to Hamilton began "My Darling Gossie" and was signed "Your Girl July." Part of it read.

"I love and adore you and shall as long as I live. I must come first always in your mind and heart, and not only first but to the exclusion of everything except your work and family."

Interest in the domestic affairs of the Boltons began to take shape last February when the fact was published that Hamilton and Mrs. Bolton were at Miami, Florida, and that the author of "The Blindness of Virtue" was seen often with the wife of the author of "The Rule of Three."

At the time Bolton said: "She left here about two months ago with a mutual friend. The whole matter has been settled."

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The Heroine of Bolton's "The Rule of Three" succeeds in capturing three husbands. The summary of the gentle art of getting married as practiced by this winner of three men is this:

The girl who wants a husband must have (1) Sympathy; (2) a sense of humor; (3) courage.

She may have (1) Beauty; (2) business training; (3) suffragette leanings.

She must have (1) A desire to argue; (2) masculine manners; (3) a sense of superiority.

And even if she lives up to all these categoric requirements a widow or a divorcee is likely to beat her to it.

"The feminine trait which makes the biggest sort of a hit with almost any man is sympathy," said Mr. Bolton in discussing his "Rule of Three." "It is a mingling of admiration and the desire to help and comfort. It is seen in the girl who thrills over a man's stories of big game hunting or civil engineering in savage countries and then adds instinctively, 'But if you had been ill with no one to take care of you.'

"So often I have known a man to marry a woman with neither looks nor brains nor anything else to recommend her. And a few inquiries have invariably shown that her sympathetic, motherly disposition was what attracted him.

"Brains do a girl no harm if she keeps them under proper control. A clever man likes a woman who is clever enough to appreciate him and more than that he will come to appreciate her cleverness for itself if it's not of the combative sort. The average man detests a woman who always wants to argue with him.

"A man may readily fall in love with a woman who is clever and who can be a good comrade, but he doesn't care for the affection of the masculine manner. In essence a woman must remain feminine to touch his emotional nature. Likewise he resents a sense of her superiority when it exists in her. He frequently gives her a pedestal, but he doesn't like to find her already posed on one and looking calmly down at him.

"In getting married as in other pursuits nothing succeeds like success. One reason why the modern girl has fewer matrimonial chances is the great activity of the widow and the divorcee. Of course the latter partly atones by returning a man to circulation when she is through with him."

And yet, knowing all this so well, Mr. Bolton knew not how to keep the love of his wife, nor to ward off the attention of a "virtuous" Englishman.

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No one who has read any of Mr. Hamilton's books or novels would have thought for a minute he would have behaved as scandalously as he did. His play, "The Blindness of Virtue," is the climax of his moral and purity preachments. It tells the story of an innocent and also morally ignorant young parson's daughter who falls in love with a young student at the parsonage and is caught by the father in the student's room in her nightgown. The preachment of virtue is on such a high plane and is driven home with such apparent sincerity it is worth while quoting parts of the play in view of Mr. Hamilton's subsequent conduct.

Harry is the good parson. Helen is his good and trusting wife. Effie is the sweet, innocent daughter of this year, and Archie is the young student who, as the play nears its end, proves to be an extremely well-behaved young man quite immune to temptation. One scene opens with this conversation between the parson and his wife:

Helen—But how can you expect a girl to be innocent if she is not ignorant?

Harry—That's just exactly what I have asked you to come here to tell me. You say that Mary Ann was a model. Look at her now. Helen, why don't we tell our children the truth? Why do we go on hiding behind false modesty and personal cowardice? Why, why are we afraid of looking at the great simple things square in the face?

Helen—Oh, it's all very difficult, Harry. It's all been argued a thousand times and there's never been any satisfactory results.

Harry—But why not? Everything else has progressed, but in this vital matter we are still prehistoric. Surely the time for puritanism is dead and done with. Surely the persistent attitude of deceiving our girls and of dodging their wondering questions from the utterly mistaken standpoint of clean-mindedness is not for intelligent and humane people. Why do we turn sniggering or shame-faced from youthful questions prompted by an unconscious awakening of the maternal instinct? Why do we drive our ignorant children to such tragedies as poor little Mary Ann will suffer under all her life? God has made the earth incredibly beautiful, but we do nothing to put beauty into the lives of His children. Every day His young things ask their parents the meaning of life. Why don't we tell them, Helen? Why don't you tell Effie? (He throws his bomb and watches his wife keenly.)

COSMO HAMILTON.

Helen (a note of amazement and shock in her voice)—Effie? Tell Effie?

Harry—Yes, darling, Effie. She is very near a woman. We have deliberately shielded her against the questions of sex. What might happen to her if she fell in love with some good-looking, unscrupulous boy?

Helen—You mean Archie?

Harry—No. I mean anyone. We know nothing of Effie's mind on this point. She is seventeen and if she is a healthy girl she has, whether she knows it or not, the maternal instinct.

Helen—Yes, but she is clean-minded and good.

Harry—But who's to know that she is strong enough to resist temptation? Here and there, of course, there are poor girls to whom morality and innocence mean nothing under the stress of nature. But to ninety-nine out of a hundred virtue means everything, and I say now that a woman who lets her daughter struggle blindly through the awakening years of her womanhood is not fit to be her mother.

Following the first harsh words they have ever had in their life, Helen, after a mighty struggle with herself, promises to tell Effie.

The next act is laid in Archie's bedroom. Archie has been away most of the night in London celebrating with a friend. He is dressed and exercising when his door softly opens and Effie enters with a scarlet dressing gown over her nightdress. Her feet are bare.

Effie—It IS you then. I woke up suddenly and thought I heard you. (Effie looks angelic and all flushed from sleep.) You gave me a horribly lonely day and kept me up half the night. You must pay for these things by doing just what I want you to do.

Archie—I kept you up half the night? How?

Effie—Well, you don't suppose I was going to let you come in without hearing all the details of your day, do you? I waited here till I fell asleep. It was 4 o'clock when I went to my room.

Archie (gasping)—You waited here!

Effie—Yes, of course, I did. Where else should I wait?

After a mildly innocent conversation she confesses her love for him and he in turn, catching her in his arms, confesses his for her. He urges her to go, but she can see nothing wrong in staying, and as they hear steps in the hall he catches her up and hides her in a cupboard as the door opens and Helen enters. She remains but a short time and Effie comes out as quickly as her mother leaves, indignant at Archie when he again urges her to leave the room. She says he doesn't love her, he says he does and they fall into each other's arms again. Her father finds them in this position.

The father sends Effie out of the room. Archie tries to explain that her visit was perfectly innocent and is called a liar for his pains.

Archie (thickly and passionately)—Blame yourself for this. Blame your wife. Effie never knew what she was doing. She knows nothing. If I hadn't adored her and hadn't been trying for all I was worth to play the game for your sake I should have gone to her room before today and I should have locked my door this morning. I wanted to. Oh, my God, how I wanted to. And she wanted me to stay though she didn't know why. If she had stayed we should not have been to blame. You would, you and your wife. Goodbye. You send me straight to hell.

But he doesn't go there, anyway. Harry discovers that his wife had not told Effie anything. He discovers, too, that both she and Archie are innocent, and the play ends with his promise to marry them.

When the Superwoman Comes

PERMIT us to introduce the Superwoman.

She is not our creation or our prophecy. It is Mrs. Minnine Sabin Cooper, dramatist and philanthropist, who has thought her out.

According to Mrs. Cooper, the superwoman will be beautiful, she will have brains and will prove herself the best wife and mother the world has yet known.

"Whatever else the superwoman may be she will not be a subman, or an imitation of man," says Mrs. Cooper. "For the last fifty years women have been trying too hard to be like men, instead of perfecting themselves as women. As I see her the superwoman will be woman plus not minus.

"She will be more beautiful, more brilliant, more noble than the woman of today, but instead of growing away from wifehood and maternity she will bring both to a perfection they have not previously known.

"We shall not have the superwoman until we get two things clear in our minds. First, that women are as important to the world as men; second, that their importance must be manifested in different ways to achieve its full effectiveness. Some of the most advanced suffragists are busy proclaiming that out of 107 occupations women have already taken up 100 and that they are going to take up the other seven right away, the job of the steeplejack, for instance, or loading coal on barges. That's nonsense.

"The superwoman will have other things to do. I do not believe that she can find any accomplishment greater than the marriage it will lie within her power to make. She will have such a wealth to give her husband and children.

"The ideal wife is one who is able to provide for her husband's mental and spiritual comfort and encouragement as well as for his material well being.

"The superwoman will own a supremely strong and well body. Women are at last beginning to realize the awful handicap of spiritual weakness. Once they made it a matter of pride and the fashionable lady considered her ability to faint at a moment's notice a sure sign of breeding and refinement. But giving her heart and lungs and feet room to move, the modern woman takes a long step toward superwomanhood.

"The day is coming when every woman will be beautiful. There is a mistake somewhere when a woman hasn't a beautiful face, just as there has been a mistake when she has a beautiful face and a soul that doesn't match.

"In the superwoman we shall find in flower three virtues budding in the soul of the woman of today—honor, tolerance and courage. There will be an end to petty lies, mean prejudices and unworthy timidity.

"The Indian poet Tagore has a line splendidly expressing superwomanhood. It is this: 'Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high.' And of course to win this state the mind must be educated, not in the schools alone but through contact with life. A superwoman without brains of the first order is inconceivable.

"With all this splendid equipment she will be willing to devote her life to one man and his children. She could do nothing finer."

Queer Typographical Twists

TYPES have a habit of getting transposed, and sometimes the twist given the letters in newspapers is mistakes in spelling and transpositions are found in the papers, especially on the afternoon dailies, where stories of news are written and set up in type in a continual race against time to "make" an edition. It is a case of hurry, hurry, hurry, as the news is "railroaded" (without proof reading or any great amount of editing) into the paper.

A friend can be converted into a fiend by the simple dropping of the letter "r." Men tried and true are easily made tired. Motion picture films are made into flims in the twinkling of an eye, and a calm person can be turned into a clam without much trouble.

During the late war in the Balkans the Bulgarian army played a prominent part in the fighting, and one night the cable news stated that the Bulgarian army would invade a town with a name that could hardly be written, let alone pronounced. One paper ran the story in black-faced type on the front page under the largest headlines it runs on that page, and the readers were surprised to learn the following morning that "Burglars" would enter the town in question.

An amusing twist of the type once developed in proof sheets, and it was luck that the paper did not print the item and cause a sensation. It was in a Southern city, and the Confederate Memorial Day is held about a week after the customary Memorial Day north of the Ohio River. In writing about the parade and the old soldiers who had worn gray uniforms in the war between the states, the reporter mentioned the "battle-scarred veterans" who had marched through the streets.

When the proofs of the story came from the composing room, the type made them "battle-scared veterans." This, of course, was corrected and sent back to the composing room with the request for a revised proof. These came down and the "battle-scared veterans" had grown into "bottle-scarred veterans." Back to the printer went the proofs and on the third attempt they were finally referred to as "battle scarred veterans."

On the Pacific Coast the newspapers, in abbreviating the Southern Pacific Railroad, call it the "Espee." One time, however, in an item about this railroad system, the type made it the "Escape," but there was nothing in the item to indicate from what it had "escaped."